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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DJIBOUTI 000881

SIPDIS  
STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/E, AF/RSA AND PM  
LONDON, PARIS, ROME FOR AFRICA-WATCHER  
AFRICOM AND CJTF-HOA FOR POLAD

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SUBJECT: SOMALIA: TFG RECRUITS ARRIVE IN DJIBOUTI FOR MILITARY  
TRAINING

REF: 09 DJIBOUTI 837; 09 DJIBOUTI 765; IIR 6 830 0100 09

CLASSIFIED BY: Eric Wong, DCM, U.S. Department of State, U.S.  
Embassy, Djibouti; REASON: 1.4(A), (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY. Within the last week, a total of 340 Somali military recruits arrived at Djibouti's primary military training center, ready to begin two months of basic infantry training. Somali and Djiboutian military officers expect additional Somali trainees to arrive in Djibouti later this week, up to a total of 400 forces. This Djiboutian effort represents another step toward developing a national army to support Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG), and merits USG support. The presence in Djibouti of military planners from Somalia's TFG, Djibouti, France, the U.S. (e.g., SOCCE and CJTF-HOA), Uganda and other regional partners (via LNOs to CJTF-HOA) provides an opportunity to ensure that Djibouti's efforts are integrated within a regional approach to assisting the TFG. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) As of July 8, some 340 TFG recruits from Somalia have flown to Djibouti to begin formal military training at the Djiboutian Armed Forces' (FAD) Ecole Militaire at Hol Hol, its primary training center. Using Mogadishu-based Jubba Airways, the GODJ transported 99 TFG recruits from Mogadishu to Djibouti on July 5, another 123 on July 6, and 118 on July 8. According to FAD and TFG military officers, additional Somali TFG recruits are expected to arrive from Mogadishu later this week, bringing the total number of TFG trainees in Djibouti to 400. (NOTE. Names of 550 potential trainees have been forwarded to AF/RSA and Embassy Nairobi Somalia Unit for Leahy vetting. END NOTE.)

13. (C) Immediately after arrival, the FAD transport the recruits to the FAD military school at Hol Hol (45km southwest of Djibouti's capital), for in-processing and medical evaluations. The primary basic training facility for the Djiboutian military and gendarmerie, the GODJ also uses facilities at the Ecole Militaire to provide vocational training to Djiboutian youth participating in the GODJ's voluntary national service program (SNA). The Djiboutian military has provided basic clothing (PT gear) and canteens to the TFG trainees, who it has organized into platoon-sized units.

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## BASIC INFANTRY TRAINING

14. (C) Somali-speaking Djiboutian military instructors have outlined a 2-month curriculum to provide the TFG recruits with training in basic infantry skills--including rifle marksmanship, drill, land navigation--as well as classroom subjects such as civil-military affairs. FAD officers recognize the need to provide training in urban warfare, and plan to incorporate it in the program.

15. (C) In a July 6 meeting with Ambassador and Emboffs, Somali Embassy DCM Abdirahman Mohamed Hirabe and Col. Mahdi Arif Ali (the Soviet-trained TFG colonel overseeing training in Djibouti) said the TFG currently considers basic infantry training a more immediate priority than training close-in protective security details for senior TFG officials. Citing the critical security situation in Mogadishu, Mahdi said the TFG could not afford "to wait until September" for French forces to train TFG recruits in Djibouti.

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GODJ REQUESTS INDIVIDUAL EQUIPMENT

16. (SBU) On July 4, Djibouti's CHOD, Major General Fathi Ahmed Houssein, made a formal request to the USG (forwarded to AF/E, AF/RSA, and Embassy Nairobi Somalia Unit) for individual equipment (e.g., desert uniforms and other clothing items) to outfit 400 TFG troops. The request also includes camp items for 400 troops (e.g., tents, cots, water bladders, and cooking materials). U.S. forces at Camp Lemonier/CJTF-HOA have provided some tents and cots to the Djiboutian government for use at the Ecole Militaire, and performed some site improvements with heavy equipment. The FAD is also using tents already in Djibouti's inventory that were previously provided via USG Foreign Military Financing (FMF).

17. (C) COMMENT. Djibouti's decision to begin immediate training of TFG forces reflects the urgent priority the GODJ places on building security capacity of neighboring Somalia. Utilizing the FAD's existing training center at Hol Hol removes the requirement to refurbish or establish new facilities, and greatly simplifies logistics. At the same time, Djibouti's efforts to train TFG forces will require USG support to succeed, whether in the form of personal equipment, curriculum development, strengthening TFG's command and control in the absence of a developed NCO corps, or contract transportation (e.g., for return to Mogadishu). The presence in Djibouti of military planners from Somalia's TFG, Djibouti, France, the U.S. (e.g., SOCCE and CJTF-HOA), Uganda and other regional partners (via LNOs to CJTF-HOA) provides an opportunity to ensure that Djibouti's efforts are integrated within a regional approach to assisting the TFG. END COMMENT.  
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